

a2 [As shown in Fig. 7] In this embodiment, a first bid having a first value and a first unit of measurement is received [at step 702]. A second bid having a second value and a second unit of measurement is received [at step 702] as well. [At step 704, the] The first and second values are then transformed to third and fourth values, respectively, having a standard unit of measurement. For example, a standard unit of measurement might be a NPV for each of the total leasing costs and total buy costs, as described in more detail in the '156 Application.

Please amend the paragraph that begins on page 33, line 21 as follows:

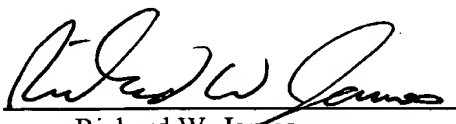
a3 It is worthy to note that any number or type of transformation variables can be used for a desired transformation function and still fall within the scope of the invention. Furthermore, the transformation functions described with respect to [Fig. 7] this embodiment may be implemented using the generic transformation 500 described with respect to Fig. 5.

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully submits that no new matter has been introduced by this Preliminary Amendment which is being made to place the application in better condition for examination. Applicant furthermore submits that no fee is due in connection with the filing of this Preliminary Amendment. If, however, the Examiner determines that one or more fees are due in connection with the filing of this Preliminary Amendment, please charge the fees to our Deposit Account No. 50-0310.

Respectfully submitted,

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